

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 13, 2021

Prepared on July 21, 2021

ITEM NUMBER: 8

SUBJECT: Integrated Report Update, 2020-2022 Cycle

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ACTION: Information/Discussion

SUMMARY

The Integrated Report is an important component of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) framework to restore and protect our nation's surface waters. This is an informational update regarding the status of California's Integrated Report (Integrated Report) for the 2020-2022 cycle as it relates to the Central Coast Region. This item summarizes the schedule, proposed listings and delistings, highlights from our regional and State Water Board workshops, and changes identified during public engagement.

DISCUSSION

Background

California's Integrated Report includes the CWA section 303(d) List of Impaired Waters (303(d) List) and section 305(b) Water Quality Conditions Report (305(b) Report). The 303(d) List identifies waterbodies that do not meet one or more water quality standards and are therefore "impaired." The 305(b) Report includes both impaired waterbodies and waterbodies attaining water quality standards. The State Water Board and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) approve updates to the 303(d) List but do not approve changes to the 305(b) Report.

For the 2020-2022 Integrated Report, the State Water Board administered the process to consider all readily available surface water quality data and information in coordination with the "on-cycle" Regional Water Boards (Central Coast, Central Valley, and San Diego regions) and one off-cycle region (the Colorado River region). The 2020-2022 Integrated Report builds upon the 2014-2016 Integrated Report by including data collected between 2010 and June 2019. The State Water Board's June 4, 2021, draft

[staff report for the 2020-2022 Integrated Report](#)¹ provides more detailed information on the methods used to compile and assess the data. Appendices to the State Water Board's staff report comprise the draft 2020-2022 Integrated Report (specifically, Appendix A - Recommended 2020-2022 303(d) List of Impaired Waters and Appendix C- Water Quality Condition Report (305(b) Report)).

Schedule for Approval and Status

The table below describes key tasks for State Water Board and Central Coast Water Board staff and opportunities for public participation in the 2020-2022 Integrated Report finalization and the 303(d) List approval process.

Task	Date
State Water Board Public Notice for the draft 2020-2022 Integrated Report (303(d) List and 305(b) Report)	May 20, 2021
Release of draft staff report for the 2020-2022 Integrated Report	June 4, 2021
Public comment period	June 4, 2021 – July 16, 2021
Central Coast Region public workshop	June 29, 2021
State Water Board public workshop*	July 6, 2021
Assist State Water Board staff with responding to public comments and changes to the draft Integrated Report	August 2021
State Water Board Public Hearing to consider approval of the revised draft 2020-2022 303(d) List and decision to submit the 2020-2022 Integrated Report to USEPA*	January 18, 2022
Prepare administrative record for submittal to USEPA	March 2022

*Central Coast Water Board staff are available for questions at these meetings.

As was mentioned in the [January 2021 Executive Officer's Report](#)² (see page 2), the State Water Board will administer the public engagement and approval process on behalf of the Regional Water Boards. Central Coast Water Board staff are currently assisting State Water Board staff with drafting responses to public comments on the June 4, 2021, draft staff report and associated 2020-2022 Integrated Report.

Summary of Proposed Listings and Delistings

In coordination with State Water Board staff, Central Coast Water Board staff completed data assessments and fact sheets for 8,615 waterbody-pollutant combinations (356 waterbodies and 193 pollutants). Based on assessments of these data, Central Coast Water Board staff proposed the following changes in the draft 2020-2022 303(d) List:

- 493 new listings (impaired waterbody-pollutant combinations added to the draft 303(d) List); and

¹https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/2020_2022_integrated_report.html

² https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2021/01_jan_28/item11%20_stfrpt.pdf

- 147 new delistings (waterbody-pollutant combinations removed from the draft 303(d) List) for the Central Coast Region.

The number of listings and delistings may change slightly as a result of public input and subsequent revisions to the draft 2020-2022 303(d) List.

As can be seen in Figure 1, with each Integrated Report cycle, the Central Coast Region's 303(d) List has grown.

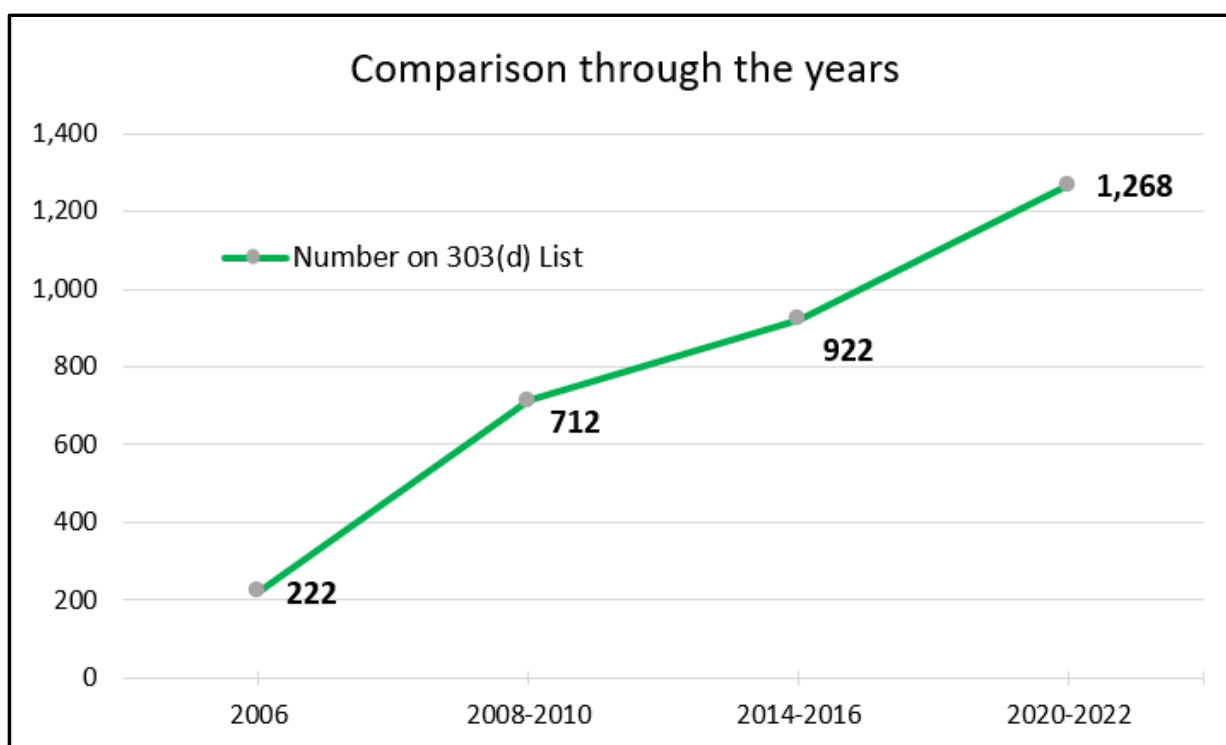


Figure 1. Number of 303(d) listings each Integrated Report cycle (2020-2022 represents the draft 303(d) List).

Over two-thirds of the proposed new listings are for pesticides (165) and metals (177), as shown in Figure 2. These listings are the result of an additional ten years of data and the use of pesticide or metals criteria for the first time this cycle. Other proposed new listings include, but are not limited to, nutrients, salinity, turbidity, pH, and toxicity.

Approximately 80% of the proposed delistings (119) are in the pathogens/bacteria category (e.g., fecal coliform and *E. coli*) and most are due to a change in the water quality objectives (see Figure 2 and the difference between the number of 'Pathogens/Bacteria' listings on the 2014-2016 303(d) List and the draft 2020-2022 303(d) List). In 2018, the State Water Board adopted the [Bacteria Provisions](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plans_policies/docs/bacteria.pdf)³, which

³ The Water Quality Control Plan for the Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California (ISWEBE Plan) Bacteria Provisions and Variance Policy, adopted on August 7, 2018 via Resolution No. 2018-0038, effective February 4, 2019.
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plans_policies/docs/bacteria.pdf

established water quality objectives for *E. coli* or Enterococci and the water contact recreation beneficial use in all inland surface waterbodies. This statewide objective supersedes the Central Coast Region's Basin Plan water quality objectives for fecal coliform and the water contact recreation beneficial use. This resulted in the delisting of 94 inland surface waterbodies from the 303(d) List for fecal coliform. In addition, the Bacteria Provisions include a salinity component. Consequently, where the salinity of the waterbody, or a specific reach of a waterbody (e.g., lagoons) is too high to apply the *E. coli* water quality objective, staff proposed delisting the waterbody for *E. coli*.

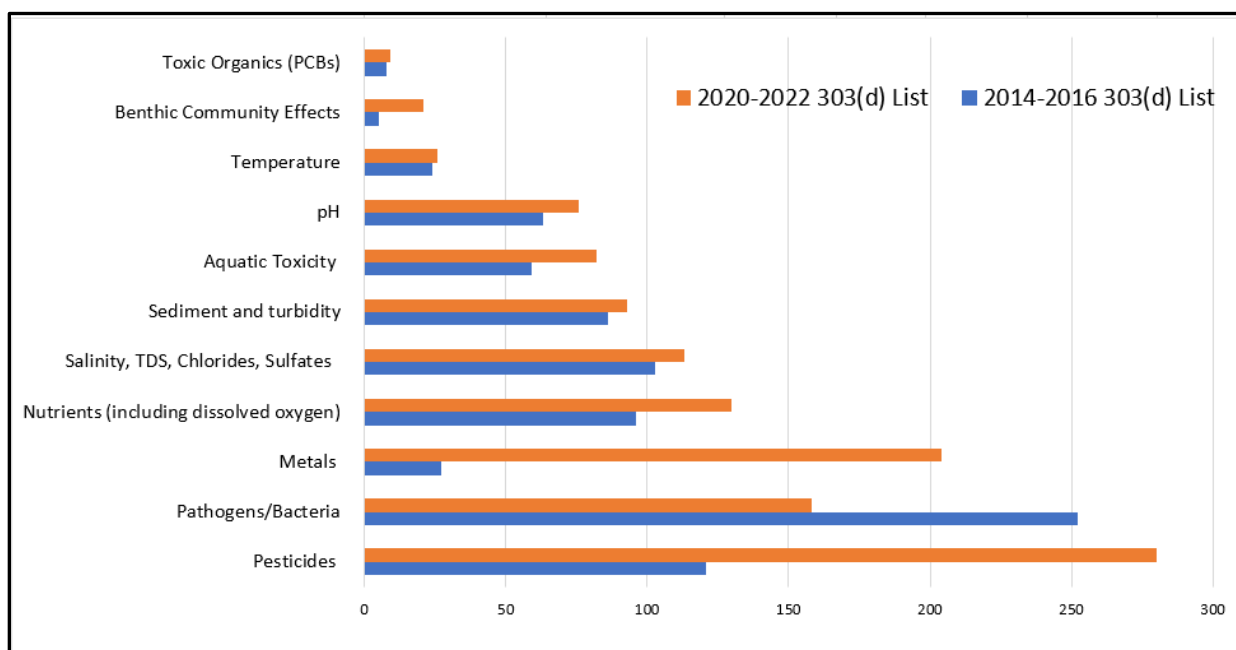


Figure 2. Number of proposed 303(d) listings for the draft 2020-2022 303(d) List (orange) compared the number of listings on the 2014-2016 303(d) List (blue), by pollutant categories.

Other noteworthy recommendations to remove a waterbody-pollutant combination from the 303(d) List (proposed delistings) include the following:

- Organophosphate pesticides where pesticide Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) have been adopted and water quality data show water quality standards are attained for the specific pesticide. Additionally, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation data confirm that the use of the specific pesticide has declined significantly in these watersheds.
 - Blanco Drain – chlorpyrifos
 - Lower Salinas River – chlorpyrifos and diazinon
 - Pajaro River – diazinon
 - Orcutt Creek - diazinon
 - Salinas Reclamation Canal - diazinon⁴

⁴ Note that the Salinas Reclamation Canal delisting for diazinon is not in the June 4, 2021 draft staff report for the Integrated Report but will be reflected in the revised draft in December 2021.

- Dissolved oxygen where nutrient TMDLs have been adopted and water quality data show water quality standards are attained for dissolved oxygen.
 - Greene Valley Creek (Santa Barbara County)
 - Main Street Channel
 - Merritt Ditch
 - Salinas Reclamation Canal
- Ammonia for Tequisquita Slough, where no exceedances of the water quality objective have occurred since 2013, coincident with the development of Pajaro River Nutrient TMDL.

The following also represent noteworthy trends of improving water quality, however, additional supporting data and documentation is needed to remove the waterbody segment and pollution combination from the 303(d) List during a future Integrated Report cycle:

- Moro Cojo Slough and nitrate:
 - Meeting seasonal TMDLs for nitrate and aquatic life beneficial uses following implementation of grant funded nutrient treatment systems in the watershed.
 - Data show continued nuisance biostimulatory responses in the lower reach and staff require both nitrate and biostimulatory response indicators (e.g., algae cover, dissolved oxygen, and chlorophyll *a*) to meet water quality standards before delisting for nitrate.
 - For the 2020-2022 303(d) List, staff propose limiting the spatial extent of the impairment to the lower Slough, near Moss Landing Marine Harbor.
- San Simeon Creek and nitrate:
 - Meeting nitrate water quality standards (concentrations now less than 1.0 mg/L nitrate as N) following an upgrade to the nitrate treatment process at a nearby wastewater treatment plant.
 - Data show continued nuisance biostimulatory responses in the lagoon and staff require both nitrate and biostimulatory response indicators (e.g., algae cover, dissolved oxygen, and chlorophyll *a*) to meet water quality standards before delisting for nitrate.
 - For the 2020-2022 303(d) List, staff propose limiting the spatial extent of the impairment to the lagoon.
- Pinto Lake and microcystins:
 - Significant reduction in the severity and duration of toxic algal blooms following implementation of grant funded projects to sequester phosphorus in Pinto Lake (2017 alum application). Consequently, the local community now has increased access to the lake for recreational activities.
 - Microcystin continues to exceed the evaluation guideline occasionally.
- Salinas Reclamation Canal and chlorpyrifos, and Tembladero Slough and chlorpyrifos and diazinon:
 - Significant reduction in pesticide concentrations with very few exceedances of the evaluation guidelines in recent years.
 - California Department of Pesticide Regulation data show that these pesticides are used infrequently in the watersheds.

Additional information can be found in the State Water Board's draft [staff report](#)⁵ (see information specific to the Central Coast Region in section 4 and Appendix I).

Summary of June 29, 2021 Central Coast Region Public Workshop

The Central Coast Water Board staff held a virtual public workshop on June 29, 2021, during the State Water Board's public comment period, to provide an opportunity to present information to local stakeholders, receive comments, and answer questions. Twenty-one people participated in the workshop, including Central Coast and State Water Board staff. Information about the workshop, including an email contact to request a copy of the staff presentation, is posted on the Central Coast Water Board's [website](#)⁶.

During the workshop, there were no specific questions on the draft 303(d) List, however there were several general questions about the listing process. Additionally, stakeholders highlighted the need for publicly available maps so they could identify the spatial location of the waterbodies proposed for listing or delisting. In response, Regional and State Water Board staff worked directly with stakeholders to provide specific mapping information as requested. On July 14, 2021, State Water Board staff posted a map of the proposed listings and delistings on their [website](#)⁷ and Central Coast Water Board staff notified the interested parties subscribed to the Central Coast Water Board's 303(d) List/Integrated Report email distribution list.

Changes Identified During Public Engagement

In advance of the Central Coast Region's public workshop, Central Coast Water Board staff had multiple conversations with stakeholders regarding the draft 303(d) List, released for public comment on June 4, 2021. In some cases, staff made changes to the draft 303(d) List (to be reflected in the revised draft 303(d) List in December 2021), whereas other needed changes will be addressed during the 2024 cycle.

Changes that will be made and reflected in the revised draft 2020-2022 303(d) List include:

- Imidacloprid guanidine (a breakdown product of the insecticide imidacloprid) – four waterbodies will be changed from 'list' to 'do not' list' due to a change in the criteria used. These four waterbodies will remain listed for the parent product, imidacloprid.
- pH in the Morro Bay watershed – four waterbodies will change from 'list' to 'do not list'. The data provider confirmed the data do not meet quality assurance requirements of the Listing Policy and should not be used.
- CSCI (California Stream Condition Index) scores for benthic invertebrate community condition – some data were omitted in error and these data will now

⁵https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/2020_2022_integrated_report.html

⁶ https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdl/303d_list.html

⁷ <https://gispublic.waterboards.ca.gov/portal/home/item.html?id=32f238f9c3d642238e0b3a20262d1c17>

be included. No decisions to list or delist will change because of these data being included.

Changes that will be made during the 2024 cycle include:

- Central Coast Long-term Environmental Assessment Network (CCLEAN) – some data were screened out and excluded from the 2020-2022 cycle because they did not meet the requirements outlined in the data solicitation for this cycle (e.g., lack of datum for stations, lack of reporting limits, or unusual sample matrix type). In coordination with the data provider and the State Water Board staff, many of these issues have been addressed and these data will be included in the 2024 cycle.
- Data not available in CEDEN when the data solicitation period ended in June 2019, but those data were collected before June 2019 – staff will include data to ensure that all data, through June 2019, will be assessed. This “tidying” step will provide a clean starting point for when the Central Coast Region is on-cycle again (2028 cycle).

State Water Board Public Workshop

The State Water Board held a public workshop on the Integrated Report on July 6, 2021. State Board staff presented an overview of the Integrated Report process and highlighted the number of listings and delistings proposed this cycle. Several State Water Board Members expressed their gratitude both to the data providers and to Water Board staff for assessing such a large amount of data this cycle. Public comments relevant to the Central Coast Region include the following:

- Tess Dunham of Kahn, Soares & Conway, LLP commented that the Central Coast region should analyze only the dissolved fraction of pyrethroids instead of total pyrethroid concentrations, consistent with the approach used by the Central Valley and San Diego regions in the 2020-2022 cycle. The Central Coast Water Board staff continue to assess the total pyrethroid concentrations, consistent with methodologies used in previously approved 303(d) Lists and TMDLs in the Central Coast Region.
- Kaitlyn Kalua of California Coastkeeper Alliance expressed concern for the State’s on-cycle/off-cycle approach because each region updates their Integrated Report every six years instead of every two years. She also expressed concern regarding the lack of transparency when data are screened and consequently excluded or disqualified from the data assessment process. The second comment is directly relevant to the Central Coast Region because staff anticipate receiving written public comments regarding the data screening process from central coast stakeholders including the Morro Bay National Estuary Program and the CCLEAN program.

Human Right to Water

California Water Code section 106.3, subdivision (a) states that it is the policy of the State of California “that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and

accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitation purposes.” On January 26, 2017, the Central Coast Water Board adopted Resolution No. R3-2017-0004, which affirms the realization of the human right to water and the protection of human health as the Central Coast Water Board's top priorities.

The 303(d) List portion of the Integrated Report serves as our TMDL Program to-do list, informs requirements in permits, and informs implementation of regulatory programs. TMDL projects are aligned with Central Coast Regional Water Board's highest priorities and vision for healthy aquatic habitat and clean groundwater specifically with respect to, identifying, preventing and correcting threats to human health (with consideration of the Human Right to Water and Disadvantaged Communities).

Disadvantaged Communities

The Central Coast Water Board implements regulatory activities and water quality projects in a manner that ensures the fair treatment of people of all ethnicities, cultures, backgrounds and income levels, including disadvantaged communities (DACs). Additionally, the Central Coast Water Board is committed to providing all stakeholders the opportunity to participate in the public process and provide meaningful input to decisions that affect their communities. As regulatory programs utilize information in the 303(d) List, staff can consider how impairments may affect DACs and prioritize regulatory activities accordingly.

Climate Change

The Central Coast faces the threat and the effects of climate change for the foreseeable and distant future. To proactively prepare and respond, the Central Coast Water Board has launched the Central Coast Water Board's Climate Action Initiative, which identifies how the Central Coast Water Board's work relates to climate change and prioritizes actions that improve water supply resiliency through water conservation and wastewater reuse and recycling; mitigate for and adapt to sea level rise and increased flooding; improve energy efficiency; and reduce greenhouse gas production. The Climate Action Initiative is consistent with the Governor's Executive Order B-30-15 and the State Water Board's Climate Change Resolution No. 2017-0012.

The Integrated Report helps identify water quality impairments and watersheds that are high quality, throughout our region. These assessments can help to inform prioritization of actions that relate to our climate change strategies. It is anticipated the Integrated Report will be useful to identify and address climate change related water quality stressors and impacts in the future such as pollutant concentration and thermal effects associated with decreased surface water flows and increased surface water temperatures.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Staff wrote this staff report before reviewing all public comment letters sent to the State Water Board by the close of the public comment period (July 16, 2021). Staff will

provide an overview of written public comments during the staff presentation at this Board Meeting.

CONCLUSION

Central Coast Water Board staff will work with State Water Board staff and stakeholders to develop responses to public comments and revise the draft 2020-2022 Integrated Report (which will be released in December 2021). The 303(d) List will be considered by the State Water Board at the January 18, 2022 Public Hearing. Once the State Water Board adopts the final 2020-2022 303(d) List, it will be submitted to USEPA for approval (in March 2022) along with the 305(b) Report, which does not require State Board or USEPA approval. The final approved 2020-2022 303(d) List will be used to inform and prioritize the development of new TMDLs and the implementation of programmatic actions addressing documented beneficial use impaired waterbodies.

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